

THE WEST ASHEVILLE STORY

A Publication of the West Asheville History Project

Sponsored by the Asheville-Buncombe Library System and The North Carolina Humanities Council

Volume 1, Issue 1 Winter 2001

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HAYWOOD ROAD



HAYWOOD ROAD NEAR BREVARD ROAD, LATE 20'S OR EARLY 30'S. PHOTO, NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION, PACK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY. DONATED BY TOMMY SELLERS.

THE STORY OF HAYWOOD ROAD

The story of Haywood Road is the story of West Asheville, because it was along this road that the town developed. Before it was called Haywood Road, it was part of the Western Turnpike that ran from Salisbury, North Carolina to the Georgia state line in Cherokee County. It was the only road from Asheville to the west. If you wanted to get to Haywood County, and later, if you wanted to get to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, you had to go down Haywood Road.

In 1885, with his West Asheville Improvement Company, Edwin Carrier began developing the road. He built 2-story brick buildings along the road, many of which still stand. It was probably at this time that Haywood Road got its name. At first, Haywood ran where Westwood Place is now, down to the river. Then W.E. Logan donated land further south so that the road could be moved and "macadamized", which meant that a mixture of gravel and tar would be laid down on the road. That made it less dusty and easier to travel on. There was a big debate at the time in West Asheville over where the road would be laid out. E.B. Atkinson argued in an Asheville Citizen editorial that the road should not be moved, due to the fact that it would displace longtime residents. Other West Asheville residents, including one identifying himself as Public B. Blowed, responded vehemently in opposition. At issue was the potential grade of the road, whose land it abutted, and whose property would be devalued as a result of the move. In the end, the County Commissioners moved the road to its current location.

At that time, West Asheville was mainly woods and fields. Carrier had laid out lots and named streets, and residents soon began to arrive. People came to West Asheville for many reasons, one of which was that it offered affordable living.

(continued on page 2)

Being the country, families could have small farms and gardens to feed themselves, yet be close enough to Asheville to work in town.

West Asheville was growing rapidly. In 1910, as electric service came to West Asheville, trolley service was extended down Haywood Road. The trolley was the easiest way to get around then, as cars had not yet hit it big in the area, and most people couldn't afford them anyway. In 1914, Haywood Road was paved.

By 1930, West Asheville's population had grown to over 12,000. Haywood Road looked a lot like it does today. The fire station had been built in 1922. The West Asheville Bank and Trust Company moved into their new building on the corner of Haywood Road and Richmond Avenue in 1927. A new Post Office opened at 795 Haywood Road. Calvary Baptist, West Asheville Presbyterian, and the Trinity United Methodist Churches all stood in their present locations. Businesses such as Fortune's Hardware, May's Market, and Home Furniture flourished. But a new development in Asheville threatened Haywood Road. It was the car.

As more people began to drive, demand for the trolley service decreased. Its last run was in 1934. To accommodate the increase in traffic, Smoky Park Bridge was constructed in 1950. People now traveled to Asheville with ease. In 1960, the Crosstown Expressway opened to traffic, and Haywood Road was no longer the primary route west. As Patton Avenue and Interstate 240 received the brunt of growth, Haywood Road retained the landmarks of its heyday. No longer the primary conduit it once was, Haywood Road is still the busy main street of West Asheville.



OLDEST HAYWOOD ROAD PHOTO TO DATE: FAIRCHILD'S STORE, CORNER OF HAYWOOD ROAD & STATE ST., 1911. GEORGE FAIRCHILD, PROPRIETOR, STANDING FRONT LEFT HOLDING HOE; HE LATER OPERATED FAIRCHILD'S GARAGE AT THIS ADDRESS. PHOTO, NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION, PACK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY. DONATED BY HARRY WORLEY.

WEST ASHEVILLE FIRSTS

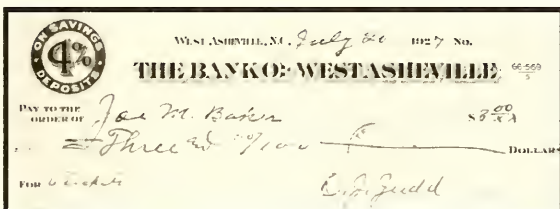
- First Settler: Robert Henry (1827)
- First Hotel: Deaver Hotel (founded by Reuben Deaver in 1830)
- First Bridge: Smith's Bridge (1833)
- First Church: Miller Meeting House (1847)
- First Electric Passenger Elevator in the South: Sulphur Springs Hotel (1889)
- First Electric Power Plant In WNC: Edwin Carrier Dam & Power Plant on Hominy Creek (1889)
- First Railway in West Asheville: West Asheville & Sulphur Springs Electric Railway (1891)
- First Trolley on Haywood Road: 1910
- First Mayor of West Asheville: H.L. Bright (1914)
- First Paved Road in West Asheville: Haywood Road (1914)
- First City Water Lines: Built under French Broad River (1914)
- First Bank; Bank of West Asheville (1915)
- First Fire Station: Station 3, at 421 Haywood Road (1922)
- First Parochial School in WNC: St. Joan of Arc (1928)
- First Flight at Carrier Field: 1930
- First Drive-In Bank in Asheville;
- First National Bank, Haywood Road Branch (1950)
- First Purpose-Built Branch Library in NC: West Branch Library (1953)
- First Shopping Center in WNC: Westgate (1956)
- First Race at Asheville Motor Speedway: 1960



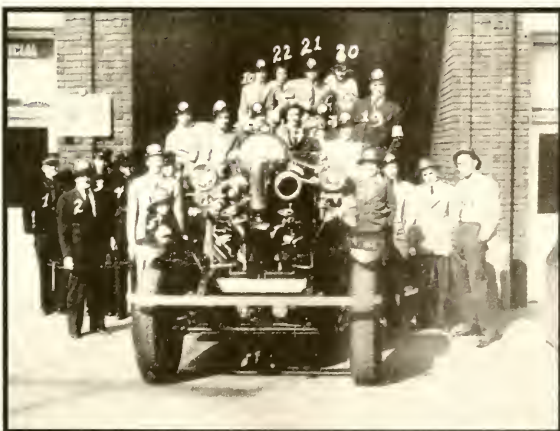
THE BANK OF WEST ASHEVILLE, 414 HAYWOOD ROAD, LATE 20'S OR EARLY 30'S. COURTESY EWART M. BALL PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, RAMSEY LIBRARY, UNCA

THE BANK OF WEST ASHEVILLE

The Bank of West Asheville opened in 1915 at the corner of Haywood Road and Beverly. In 1927, a new bank building opened on the corner of Haywood Road and Richmond Avenue. The yellow brick structure was 3 stories high and was called "West Asheville's First Skyscraper". The Bank of West Asheville closed in November of 1930 as the Depression deepened. The building still stands, and looks much as it did when new.



BANK OF WEST ASHEVILLE CHECK, 1927. COURTESY DAN JUDD



AUXILIARY FIREMEN, STATION 3, 421 HAYWOOD ROAD. STATION 3, BUILT IN 1922, OPERATED UNTIL 1979. IT WAS WEST ASHEVILLE'S FIRST PERMANENT FIRE STATION, SUCCESSOR TO A VOLUNTEER UNIT ESTABLISHED IN 1917 BUT FORCED TO CLOSE IN 1918 DUE TO A MANPOWER SHORTAGE CAUSED BY THE WAR. BUILDING STILL STANDS. PHOTO, NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION, PACK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY.



AYCOCK SCHOOL, 441 HAYWOOD ROAD, 1951 OR 1952. PHOTO, NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION, PACK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

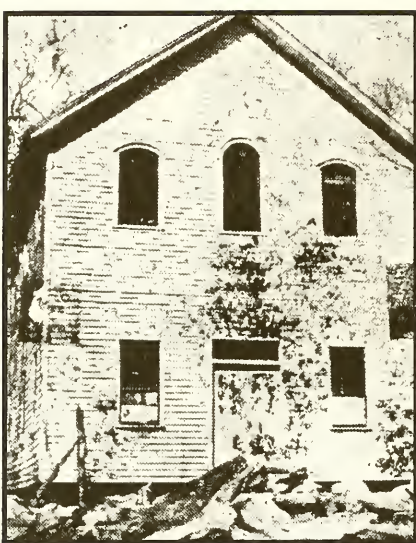
AYCOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Aycock Elementary School at 441 Haywood Road opened in 1927. Named for Charles B. Aycock, NC's "Education Governor", the school was built on the site of West Asheville's first public school, a 2-room brick structure which stood on the lot behind the present building, and which was torn down in 1943. Aycock Elementary School served generations of West Asheville students, most of whom walked to school. The present building was erected in the 60s and now houses the Accelerated Learning Center.

ASHEVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT STATION #3

AUXILIARY FIREMEN ASHEVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Captain John. L. Hall | 12. B.A. Barrosse |
| 2. Mr. Mac Kiser | 13. Frank A. Davis, Capt. AF |
| 3. Fireman Arrowood | 14. Ted Gaze |
| 4. Fireman Ted Callaway | 15. Jimmy Davis |
| 5. Billy Davis | 16. Harold Cummings |
| 6. Dayle Woody | 17. Jae Bassett |
| 7. Fireman Grady | 18. Harold Hicks |
| (Turkey) Wilson | 19. J.L. Duckett |
| 8. Austin O. Cambs | 20. Mary Louise Brandle |
| 9. George Hughes, Lt. AF | 21. Jack Hensley |
| 10. Joe Hensley | 22. Marion Davis |
| 11. Henry May, 2nd Lt. AF | |



MILLER MEETING HOUSE, 1847, 587 HAYWOOD ROAD.
PHOTO, TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

On September 6, 1847, Thomas L. Gaston deeded an acre of land along the future Haywood Road to brothers Peter and George Miller, "for the benefit of the neighborhood", as the deed stated. Peter built a 1-room frame building named The Miller Meeting House. Used as a "day school" through the week and for non-denominational services on Sundays, this building was West Asheville's first church AND first school. In 1871, through the influence of James Buttrick, a zealous Methodist from England, the church joined the fold of the Southern Methodist Church, and the name was changed to Balm Grove. In 1909, when a new building was erected, the name changed to West Asheville Methodist Church. The current building was completed in 1927. Church membership through the 40's exceeded 1200. In 1968, the church adopted its present name, Trinity United Methodist Church. The church celebrated its 150th anniversary in 1997.

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Organized in 1909, Calvary Baptist Church started out with 68 members meeting in the Odd Fellows Hall on Haywood Road (current site of B & B Pharmacy). Construction on the present building began in 1921 and the building was first used on May 13, 1923. In 1924, Calvary formed the first Vacation Bible School in Asheville, and in 1934 the church formed the first Brotherhood organization in North Carolina. The beloved Rev. J.B. Grice served as pastor 1918-1947. The present congregation of more than 1200 celebrated Calvary's 90th anniversary in 1999.



ODD FELLOWS HALL, CORNER OF HAYWOOD RD. AND HANOVER ST.,
1927. PHOTO, CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH.

WEST ASHEVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In 1913, P.P. Wynn of West Asheville started a Sunday School on the second floor of the Ideal Drug Store building at 723 Haywood Road. In 1916, the West Asheville Presbyterian Church was organized; the property at the corner of Haywood Road and Virginia Avenue was purchased and the first church building—the "Potato House"—was erected. The congregation grew potatoes on the property to raise funds for the current sanctuary, built in 1922. In 1943, the church helped organize the Malvern Hills Presbyterian Church. In 1956, a new Sunday School building was built. The church celebrated its 80th anniversary in 1996.



"THE BARN IN THE POTATO PATCH", 690 HAYWOOD RD., 1917.
PHOTO, WEST ASHEVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Grace Baptist Church was organized October 26, 1947, in the chapel of Anders-Rice Funeral Home at 521 Haywood Road; membership had reached 350 when the charter period ended that November. The church purchased the site at 718 Haywood Road (the former Gardner Hospital), and met in the Masonic Hall on Hanover St. until renovations were completed. The first service was held at the new location December 21, 1947. In August, 1854, the old residence was torn down to make way for the new sanctuary, dedicated in March of 1955. The church celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1997.



GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, 718 HAYWOOD ROAD. GARDNER HOSPITAL UNDER DEMOLITION TO MAKE WAY FOR CURRENT SANCTUARY. PHOTO, GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH.

ST. JOAN OF ARC CHURCH & SCHOOL

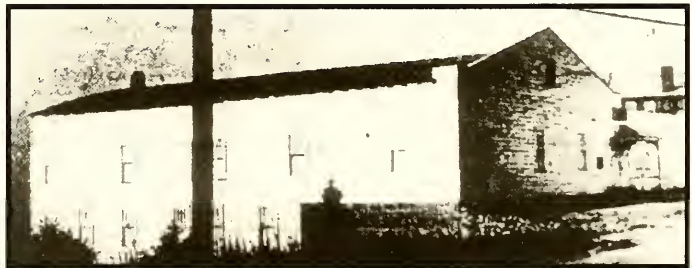
In March of 1927, parishioners from St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Asheville purchased a 12-room house on the corner of Haywood Rd. and Blue Ridge Ave. in West Asheville. At the direction of Father Louis J. Bour, pastor of St. Lawrence, the structure was renovated as a chapel and the first parochial school in Western North Carolina. The school and chapel were named St. Joan of Arc; chapel furnishings, including pews and an organ, were donated by parishioners. Enrolling 75 pupils during its first year of operation, by 1949 the school provided elementary and high school education to 163 students. The present church building was constructed in 1936. In 1950, construction began on a new brick school building. In 1980, the school consolidated with St. Eugene's as Asheville Catholic School, in North Asheville. The church celebrated its 65th anniversary in 1993.



ST. JOAN OF ARC CHURCH AND SCHOOL, 919 HAYWOOD ROAD. PHOTO COURTESY NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION, PACK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY.

WEST ASHEVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

In December, 1929, some members of French Broad Avenue Baptist Church who had homes in West Asheville formally organized West Asheville Baptist Church. The charter congregation of 113 members met in a rented "Upper Room" above the A&P Store at 797 Haywood Rd. A lot was leased on Haywood Rd., across from Blue Ridge Avenue, and a church was erected; first services were held there on May 18, 1930. In 1935, the lease on the lot ran out. Raising \$900 in a single Sunday, the church purchased its present site on the corner of Haywood Rd. and Lynndale Ave. The church met in the old Vance Elementary School while the building was under construction. At 10:16 p.m. on May 27, 1982, the church suffered one of West Asheville's worst tragedies. Lightning struck the church, starting a huge fire. 25-year old fireman Raymond Flowers lost his life battling the blaze, and the church was severely damaged. The congregation rebuilt the church in 3 years, dedicating the new building on May 31, 1985. The church celebrated its 70th anniversary in 1999.



WEST ASHEVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH, 926 HAYWOOD ROAD; FIRST ANNIVERSARY, DECEMBER 1, 1930. PHOTO COURTESY WEST ASHEVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH.

THE ISIS THEATER

The Isis Theater, at 743 Haywood Road, opened Haywood Road, opened December 26, 1937. Built at a cost of \$50,000, the art deco structure featured two screening rooms and could seat 550. The theater offered a matinee and two evening shows Monday-Friday, with continuous shows after 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Admission in 1937 was 20 cents for adults and 10 cents for children. Usually one of the features was a western. A generation thrived on its Saturday matinees and air conditioning. The Isis closed its doors in November of 1957.



THE ISIS THEATER, 743 HAYWOOD ROAD, DATE NOT KNOWN. PHOTO, EWART M. BALL PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, RAMSEY LIBRARY, UNCA. PRESENT LOCATION OF PASTABILITIES RESTAURANT.

MAY'S MARKET

May's Market, founded in 1928 at 747 Haywood Road by John B. May, became a West Asheville institution. Mr. May employed all of his children in the store, and countless West Asheville young people got their first jobs working at May's Market after school and on Saturdays. The store was open 6 days a week, and groceries were delivered by bicycle and delivery truck. During the Depression, Mr. May extended credit to many of his customers. His daughter Nancy, who began working in the store in 1943, recalls that the last Depression-era accounts were paid off during the 50's. After the war, she and her husband, Frank Leppert, joined Mr. May in the family business. May's Market was known for its meats; butcher Ralph Pitillo ran the meat counter for over 40 years. May's Market closed in 1978, after 50 years in business.



MAY'S MARKET, 747 HAYWOOD ROAD, 1970'S. PHOTO COURTESY FRANK AND NANCY LEPPERT. PRESENT LOCATION OF MERCADO MEXICANA.



HAYWOOD ROAD, WEST ASHEVILLE, EARLY 30S. LEFT TO RIGHT: A & P, 797 HAYWOOD ROAD; OLD POST OFFICE, 795 HAYWOOD ROAD; PALACE THEATER, 791 HAYWOOD ROAD; RED STAR STATION, 785 HAYWOOD ROAD. POST OFFICE OPENED IN 1929. PALACE THEATER OPENED 1928. PHOTO, EWART M. BALL PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, RAMSEY LIBRARY, UNCA.



WEST ASHEVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY

In 1929, the West Asheville Community Club launched a drive to secure a public library for the community. The Depression, followed by WW II, caused delays, but in 1953 the goal

was achieved. Built on property at 970 Haywood Road donated by the West Asheville Business Association, West Asheville Branch Library was the first purpose-built branch library in North Carolina. The library shared space in the \$100,000 building with Fire Station 6 and the West Asheville Community Center. Dedicated on May 31, 1953, the library was hailed as a cultural milestone in the history of West Asheville. *"Library Journal"* in November, 1954, noted that "Community gratitude is frequently expressed. . . that city attire is not required." Opening with a collection of 2500 new books, the library registered a first month's circulation of 4,365. In 1997, the library moved into a new building at 942 Haywood Road, next door to the old location. The collection now numbers over 40,000 items; circulation in October, 2000, topped 15,000. West Asheville Branch Library remains the busiest branch in the Asheville-Buncombe Library System.



INTERIOR OF WEST BRANCH LIBRARY, 1953. FIRST LIBRARIAN, MRS. DOAN OGDEN, VISIBLE AT DESK IN BACKGROUND. PHOTO, NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION, PACK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY.



LAVONNE'S DRIVE-IN




GRAND OPENING TUESDAY, 4 P. M.

Of Western Carolina's Most Beautifully Designed

LAVONNE'S DRIVE-IN

959 Haywood Road West Asheville

Policy
**OPEN
DAILY
11 A. M.
to 12 Midnight!**
*The only drive-in
courtesy efficient
CURB
SERVICE*

NOW OPEN

Featuring
• CHICKEN IN BASKET
• FRIED SHRIMP IN BASKET
• TASTY SANDWICHES
In all the Popular combinations
FOUNTAIN DAIRY BAR
NO BEER NOR WINE SERVED HERE!

**SODA
FOUNTAIN
SERVICE**
More 14 Spots around
Central Drive-In Bar
Featuring
• Mixed Nuts in Bowl
• Soft Drinks
• All Day Music
• More

LAVONNE'S DRIVE-IN, 955 HAYWOOD ROAD, ACROSS THE STREET FROM WEST BRANCH LIBRARY, 1951-58; BECAME TOOT & TELL DRIVE-IN IN 1959. PHOTO, EWART M. BALL PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, RAMSEY LIBRARY, UNCA.



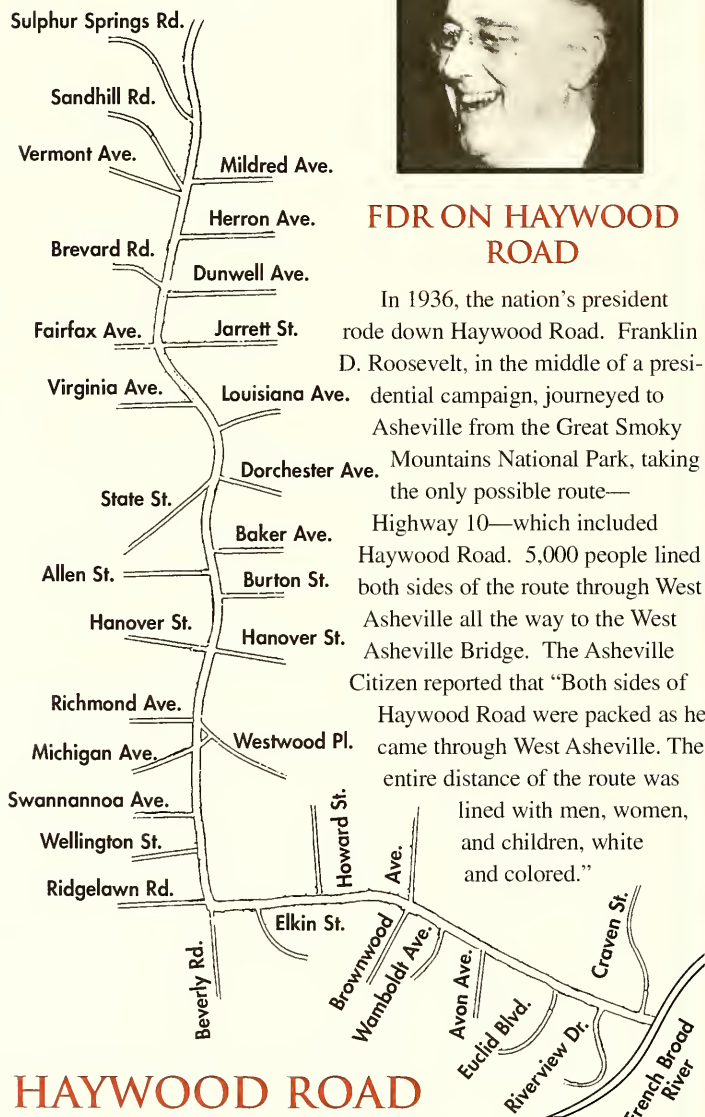
HAYWOOD ROAD AT I-240, LOOKING WEST; NOVEMBER, 1999. PHOTO COURTESY LISSA JUEDEMANN.



FDR ON HAYWOOD ROAD

In 1936, the nation's president rode down Haywood Road. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in the middle of a presidential campaign, journeyed to Asheville from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, taking the only possible route—

Highway 10—which included Haywood Road. 5,000 people lined both sides of the route through West Asheville all the way to the West Asheville Bridge. The Asheville Citizen reported that “Both sides of Haywood Road were packed as he came through West Asheville. The entire distance of the route was lined with men, women, and children, white and colored.”



HAYWOOD ROAD

West Asheville History Project West Asheville Branch Library 942 Haywood Road, West Asheville 828-251-4990

THANKS!

Asheville-Buncombe Library System • Asheville Citizen-Times • Biltmore Press • Rosemarie Brown-Taylor • Calvary Baptist Church • Mary Ruth Duyck • Friends of West Asheville Branch Library • Dale Groce • Barbara Hall • Betsy Murray • Rob Neufeld • Zoe Rhine • David Simon • North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Public Library • Special Collections, Ramsey Library, UNCA • Trinity United Methodist Church • West Asheville Business Association • West Asheville Lions Club • West Asheville Story Circle Participants • Ann Wright • Helen Wykle

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SPECIAL THANKS

Bruce Emory • Harlan Gradin • Culley Holderfield • Freddie Hopper • Mrs. Inez Horton • Image 420 • Ed Sheary • Staff of West Branch Library • The PEOPLE of West Asheville!

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